

WILDFLOWERS!

February 24, 2019

Recent heavy rains have damaged roads and trails in the park, but may serve to extend the blooming season by a few weeks, by allowing plants to grow larger.

Heading east on S-22, look for early blooms along the roadside and in the washes & canyons between mile 33 and 36. There is a large pullout between miles 30 and 31 with room for parking near fields of purple sand verbena.

Just west of mile marker 35, park and walk into Arroyo Salado, Coachwhip Canyon, or Ella Wash. You'll find a wide variety of flowers, including sand verbena, desert sunflower, brown-eyed evening primrose, and lupine. These flowers are blooming in response to fall storms in this area, and may be nearing their peak. Desert lilies are blooming in Arroyo Salado primitive camp, with more in bud.

CAUTION: Dirt roads into the Borrego Badlands require four-wheel-drive!

The mouth of Coyote Canyon, at the north end of paved DiGiorgio Road, has fields of flowers in bloom. The dirt road into Lower Coyote Canyon has been opened (4WD vehicles only) as far as Desert Gardens, but remains CLOSED to ALL traffic (including foot traffic) beyond. There is room for parking at the end of the pavement. Flower seekers may walk EAST a short distance up a private dirt road to a field of desert sunflowers and sand verbena. You might also find lupine, brown-eyed evening primrose, and dune primrose, as well as a few desert lilies.

In the southern part of Anza-Borrego, June Wash is reported to have nice flowers. Park near mile marker 42 on highway S-2 and walk up the wash.

For maps and directions, call the Visitor Center at 760-767-4205.

For guided flower walks on Fridays, reserve your spot with the Anza-Borrego Foundation at 760-767-0446.

Ocotillo Wells SVRA is also experiencing an outstanding bloom due to heavy rain in the fall. Visitors with 4WD can check out The Cove, Devil's Slide, Palm Wash, and Tarantula Wash, as well as the Buttes Pass area, or join staff for a 4WD flower tour at 3 pm on Feb. 24th. Those without 4WD vehicles should visit the OWSVRA Discovery Center (near mile marker 91 on Highway 78), and walk the accessible trail to see a variety of things in bloom. Their staff will be offering free wildflower tours at the Discovery Center from 10-4 on February 24th. 760-767-5393.